

**REMARKS**

In this Amendment, independent claim 1 is amended. After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-18 will be pending in the application. Claims 6-18 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1-5 are under consideration.

Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the carrier for cell culture is “substantially in a form of a plane.” This amendment is supported by the specification at page 9, second full paragraph.

No new matter has been introduced, and entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

**Response to Claim Rejection Under 35 USC §102(b)**

At page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-4 under 35 USC §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Skjak-Braek et al. (WO 91/09119, hereinafter “WO‘119”).

Specifically, with respect to independent claim 1, the Examiner contends that WO‘119 discloses “microcapsules for encapsulating cells comprising hydrogel such as alginate containing chitosan, wherein the water-containing polymer gel is coated with alginate.”

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the carrier for cell culture “is substantially in a form of a plane.”

Skjak-Braek does not disclose any carrier for cell culture, but merely discloses microcapsules. Further, Sjak-Braek does not disclose a carrier for cell culture that is substantially in the form of a plane.

Accordingly, Skjak-Braek does not anticipate any claim of this application, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

**Response to Claim Rejection Under 35 USC §103(a)**

The Examiner rejects claims 1-5 under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over WO'119, in view of Huguet et al., *Process Biochem.* (1996).

The Examiner admits that WO'119 does not teach an outermost chitosan-coating layer formed on an alginic acid-coating layer, as recited in claim 5.

However, the Examiner believes that Huguet teaches chitosan-coated alginate beads to control the release of encapsulated biological substances.

The Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to modify the microcapsules of WO'119 to have an outermost chitosan-coating layer formed on an alginic acid-coating layer, as taught by Huguet. The Examiner believes that one of skill in the art would have been motivated to make these modifications in order to, *inter alia*, control release of encapsulated biological materials.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite that the carrier for cell culture of the invention “is substantially in a form of a plane.”

It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references teach any carrier for cell culture, and further, none of the cited references teach a carrier for cell culture that is substantially in the form of a plane.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
USSN 10/691,506

Since the art cited by the Examiner does not teach all limitations of the claims, nor even the general nature of the invention (a carrier for cell culture), the present claims cannot be *prima facie* obvious.

Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

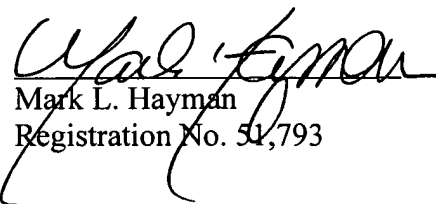
Respectfully submitted,

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WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

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